

The Playboy of the Netherworld

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and this impassivity is belied by passages
in his poetry
of a quivering tenderness:

Your love was much,
Your life but an inhabitant of his.

Cyrano, Cyrano,
I yearn, and thirst, and ache to be beloved,
As I could love,—through my eternal soul,
Immutably, immortally, intensely,
Immeasurably. Oh! I am not at home
In this December world, with men of ice,
Cold sirs and madams. That I had a heart,
By whose warm throbs of love to set my
soul!
I tell thee I have not begun to live,
I'm not myself, till I've another self
To lock my dearest, and most secret
thoughts in;
Change petty faults, and whispering pardons
with;
Sweetly to rule, and Oh! most sweetly
serve.

Surely, if the writer of that lived withdrawn
into his shell,
it was precisely because he was too
sensitive, and had
suffered. It is as if part of him had perished
young. His
very portrait, as an undergraduate, has a
mummy-like
air. He resembles his own "Wolfram, a dead
thing in a
living world, gentle once but hardened
now. Certainly
his letters show him, if no lover, at all events
a good hater.
He reveals a particular dislike of British
Philistinism,
whether in individuals like 'Mr. Milman', or
in the nation
as a whole:

Drink, Britannia! Britannia, drink your tea,
For Britons, bores, and buttered toast, they all
begin with B.

O flattering likeness on a copper-coin,
Sit still upon your slave-raised cotton ball
With upright toasting-fork and toothless cat!

But, for that matter, the whole world
sickens him: I am
now so thoroughly penetrated with the
conviction of the

absurdity and unsatisfactory nature of
human life, that I